



VETERAN'S FOCUS

Issue #4 Veteran's Focus newsletter

GET THE TOOLS YOU NEED

Veteran's Buy Back for Retirement Purposes

FSAFEDS

Health Care Management Act of 2011

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

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VR&E

TREASURY SUPPORTS VETERANS

This is the fourth Quarterly Veteran's Focus newsletter for Fiscal Year 2015. We are excited to bring veterans relevant and pertinent information to assist with career transition needs. We look forward to serving you.



GET THE TOOLS YOU NEED

FSA Feds is a flexible spending account package that is available to active federal government employees within an executive branch of government or other Federal entities that opt to utilize FSA for your FEHB plan pre-tax savings.

[Read more](#)

VETERAN SPOTLIGHT

Maria Gogo EEO Assistant, Departmental Offices

[Read more](#)

VEPO INFORMATION CORNER

Get the links and numbers you need to stay connected.

[Read more](#)

TREASURY is on the VERG!

The Treasury Veterans Employee Resource Group (VERG) is off to a great start and we have selected the interim president. The Veterans Employment Program Office (VEPO) received several applications and was pleased to see employees show off their many talents. Join us as we welcome Maricette Piña, VERG President.

Meet Maricette Piña



My name is Maricette Piña. I am a recent graduate of Angelo State University's Master of Security Studies in Intelligence, Security studies, and Analysis (MISSA) Program in which I graduated from December 13, 2014. I am currently enrolled as a continuing student in the Master of Science in Homeland Security with a Master's Certificate in Emergency Management and in Cyber Security

with a projected graduation date of Spring 2016. My undergraduate degrees are a BS in Fashion Retail Management and an AAS in Graphic Design. I am a U.S. Navy veteran, and while serving on active duty was a designated Fire Controlman, specifically as an Aegis Computer Network Technician. I earned certificates in Advanced Electronics, Fire Control, Combat Systems Training, Fiber Optics, and Computer Display and Networking. I was stationed on board the guided missile cruiser, USS Bunker Hill-CG 52 in San Diego, CA.



Veteran's Buy Back for Retirement Purposes

Retirement is a very individual issue for veterans. It is a myth that military service time is automatically credited towards civil service retirement. Military service is not automatically credited toward civil service retirement. To find out if this potentially is to your benefit, the veteran must do some in depth mathematical calculations and determine what is best according to individual's lifestyle. Official documentation (RI-20-97) is required to show estimated earnings. A veteran is only eligible to apply for up to two years once hired with no penalty. After this period, interest is accrued in order to buy back military time. This process must be completed before applying for retirement.

Here are resources that may be helpful to determine how to go about ascertaining your status and what you can do to make the best choices. For example, a disability that occurred in wartime or if Chapter 67 (reservists), military pay is not waived:

<http://www.fedshirevets.gov/veteranemployees/retirement/index.aspx>

FERS:

<http://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information/service-credit/#military>

CSRS:

<http://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/csrs-information/service-credit/#military>

CSRS & FERS Handbook Chapter 23:

<http://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/publications-forms/csrsfers-handbook/c023.pdf>

Pamphlet:

<http://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/publications-forms/pamphlets/ri83-2.pdf>

If you are a current Treasury veteran employee, contact your bureau HR personnel specialist for further details with buying back your military time.

Health Care Management

Did you know that you have access to your health care questions by visiting:

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/manage/health?>

Initially, ebenefits allowed veterans to search different aspects of your medical needs, review online topics and opportunity to virtually ask questions and receive answers quickly. The veteran will need a member login account with premium access to take advantage of additional features. You will be able to communicate with your VA healthcare provider through secure e-mail to ask medical questions, receive lab work results and weight management information, refill prescriptions, review My HealtheVet account, view medical records, and much more. There are numerous tools available for you to manage your own health care benefits, receiving faster services while saving time.

FSA FEDS

FSA Feds is a flexible spending account (FSA) package that is available to active federal employees within an executive branch of government or other entities that opt to utilize the FSA Program. By using this service, the federal employee can pay for eligible out of pocket health care and dependent care expenses with pre-tax money. The employee determines the amount of money to cover expenses based on employee's healthcare and dependent needs for the calendar year. Keep in mind that a deduction from payroll will be taken out, in order to cover expenses. Planning carefully is to your best advantage. Look at the Eligible Expense Listing (Juke Box) for a listing of the most common eligible expenses. Items listed are potentially eligible for reimbursement. A beneficial reimbursement is a

mileage claim to and from healthcare appointments. To help estimate actual savings, use the Savings Calculator or consult with a tax preparer. This program is a definite tax savings. Usually enrollment is either within 60 days of the employee's actual start date or the enrollment period. Visit the FSAFEDS website for enrollment eligibility. For employees already enrolled, a Qualifying Life Event can be amended to increase the payment that is already withdrawn of the employee's paycheck.

For more information, please call:

1-877-FSAFEDS (372-3337)

or go to:

<https://www.fsafeds.com/GEM/Enrollment/BeforeYouBegin>

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011

Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW)

This Act of Congress has provided veterans the following:

- ★ 1 year additional GI Bill for high demand jobs
- ★ 1 year additional Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits
- ★ Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is mandatory
- ★ Acquire Veteran Preference previous to separation
- ★ Department of Labor tasked to translate military skills to civilian jobs
- ★ Provide tax credit to employers hiring Veterans

Please review for more information:

http://www.benefits.va.gov/VOW/docs/VOW_Factsheet.pdf



Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E)

The Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation Program helps qualified veterans receive vocational rehabilitation and employment services to help with job training, employment accommodations, resume development, and job seeking skills coaching. Other services may be provided to assist veterans in starting their own businesses or to obtain independent living services for those who are severely disabled and unable to work in traditional employment. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs) and Employment Coordinators (ECs) assist veterans who have service-connected disabilities find meaningful, sustainable careers. VRCs offer job counseling, direct veterans to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) services specific to needs, and connect veterans with training or other opportunities to help reach their employment goals. Veterans entitled to these benefits work with a VRC to develop a personalized rehabilitation plan following one of five tracks. One of the most popular tracks that the Department of the Treasury utilizes is the Non-Paid Work Experience Program (NPWE). Through the NPWE, Treasury is providing training and work experience to those who have served our country and are now returning to the civilian workforce. Although employment upon completion of the program is not always possible, Treasury works to assist all participants to develop their



resumes, and to better understand the federal hiring process and search for employment within Treasury or another federal agency.

Participants in this program are no longer on active duty; however, they are paid a small subsistence allowance from the VA while working (non-paid) with a federal agency. The NPWE program is typically authorized by the VA in 90-day intervals after the initial six months. However, the program may be authorized up to 18 months.

Veterans are eligible for the NPWE program if they:

- ★ Have received, or will receive, a discharge that is other than dishonorable
- ★ Have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10%, or a memorandum rating of 20% or more from the Department of Veteran Affairs
- ★ Apply for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment VetSuccess services

For more information about the **VA VR&E program** and the other support they provide veterans, visit their website at

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/vsoc.asp>

Maria Gogo



My name is Maria Gogo, US Army, Counterintelligence (CI) Agent (97B). I retired in 2000 after 20 years of service. I decided to retire so that I can raise my two youngest children and be a stay at home mom.

I was born and raised on the beautiful island of Guam. I'm the 8th of 9 children.

I joined the Army in the summer going into my senior year of high school under the delayed entry program. I left for basic training a month after I turned 18. I was raised in a sheltered environment where kids were seen but not heard. I didn't have a voice and everything was done for the good of the whole. There was no I, only we. The military was my ticket to freedom, at least that's how I saw it. The transition was easy; in fact I had more freedom in the military than at home.

With my 20 years of service, I've served overseas duty in Japan, Germany, Turkey, and Belgium. Most of my stateside assignments have been on the East Coast at Ft. Meade, MD. I served at the Pentagon, and in Colorado, and North Carolina. I've had temporary assignments in Arizona, Texas, Kentucky, Hawaii and Korea. I've held positions from Administrative Clerk to Company Sergeant.

My most memorable experience in the military was the people and different cultures that I've had the privilege of encountering. I've learned tolerance, patience and perseverance.

I'm currently an EEO Assistant with the Office of Civil Rights and Diversity at Department of the Treasury. After over 10 years of being a stay at home mom and divorced, I decided to rejoin the work force. It was not easy; I had a real estate and insurance agent license, part time work with the U.S. Census, and worked at a credit union.

I had the opportunity to enroll in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation (VocRehab) program. This program is for eligible veterans to change their career paths. The eligible veteran works with a counselor to assist in choosing a career path that's suitable to the veteran. The veterans go through the training (formal or technical); and then are referred to another counselor who helps with internships or on the job opportunities. It isn't simple, it takes patience and sometimes life happens. But you have to stay focused and persevere. I am a successful graduate of the VocRehab program. I interned with the Internal Revenue Service for 16 months, got hired as a permanent part time federal employee, and then got hired as a full time federal employee with the Treasury Department.

**IMAGINE
YOURSELF
HERE**



VEPO INFORMATION CORNER

Veterans Preference and Special Hiring Authorities

By law (Title 5 USC, Section 2108), veterans with and without disabilities are entitled to preference over others in hiring from competitive lists of eligible applicants and may be considered for special noncompetitive appointments for which they are eligible. If you are not sure of your preference eligibility, visit the Department of Labor's Veterans' Preference Advisor. Federal agencies may use "special hiring authorities" to hire individuals with disabilities outside the normal competitive hiring process, and sometimes may even be required to give preferential treatment to veterans, including disabled veterans, in making hiring decisions. For information on special hiring authorities that may apply to you, visit [Feds Hire Vets](#).

Opportunities at Treasury

For career opportunities with the Department of Treasury, visit <https://treasury.usajobs.gov/>. The link will direct you to the current job vacancies at Treasury; narrow the search by job category, location, and Treasury bureau. Remember, when applying for career opportunities on USAJOBS, attach the required documentation. Based on the job vacancy and veteran status, applicant must include transcripts, DD -214, Civil Service Preference Letter (known as VA letter), disability determination from a branch of the Armed Forces, and SF-15.

Transition to a federal government career at the Department of the Treasury

★ [Read more about Careers at Treasury](#)

A Message from the Veterans Employment Program Office (VEPO)

The VEPO values your opinion. Let us know what you would like to see in the next quarterly Veteran's Focus. We hope the Veteran's Focus provides you with tools and resources for a smoother transition into a federal government career and provide continual support for our Treasury veteran employees. If you would like to see a colleague recognized in the Treasury Veteran Spotlight, please submit the employee's name and contact information to the VEPO. Send your recommendations and comments to vets@treasury.gov.

The VEPO maintains a veteran's email distribution list and provides job opportunities and other veteran resources on a frequent basis. If you would like to be added to the Treasury veterans mailing list, email vets@treasury.gov.

GET CONNECTED

If you work for the Department of the Treasury and are interested in helping with veteran recruitment activities, referring veterans for career or intern opportunities, meeting your bureau Veteran Employment Representative (VER) or joining the Treasury Veterans Employee Resource Group (VERG), contact the VEPO at Vets@treasury.gov.

★
Griselda V. Wallace
VETERANS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM MANAGER
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EMAIL: VETS@TREASURY.GOV



NOTE: The Department of Treasury Veterans Employment Program Office will be closed:

September 7, 2015 - Labor Day

October 12, 2015 - Columbus Day

November 11, 2015 - Veterans Day

November 26, 2015 - Thanksgiving Day

December 25, 2015 - Christmas Day

January 1, 2016 - New Year's Day

